

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NODS-00

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S E C R E T TEL AVIV 8143

EXDIS DIST AS NODIS CHEROKEE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, IS, EG, US
SUBJECT: PROPOSED LONDON FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING

REF: STATE 162963

1. I MET WITH DAYAN PRIVATELY AT HIS HOME IN ZAHALA AT 1930 ON JUNE 27 AND REVIEWED ALL POINTS IN PARAS THREE, FOUR, FIVE AND SIX OF REFTEL. IN ADDITION, STRICTLY FOR HIS PLANNING PURPOSES, I TOLD HIM THAT WE WERE LOOKING AT DATES DURING THE WEEK OF JULY 17 JUST AFTER THE END OF THE EUROPEAN SUMMIT, BUT MADE CLEAR THAT NOTHING AT ALL WAS PINNED DOWN AT THIS POINT. HE SAID THAT THOSE DATES WOULD BE SATISFACTORY AND HE WOULD LET ME KNOW IF HE SAW ANY PROBLEM (HE HAS NOT DONE SO, SO I ASSUME HE CAN ADJUST TO OUR REQUIREMENTS AND TO KAMEL'S PREFERENCES).

2. HE WAS SLIGHTLY ON THE DEFENSIVE ABOUT THE MOST RECENT STATEMENT BY THE ISRAELI CABINET, ASKING WHY SADAT HAD SEEN IT NECESSARY TO STATE PUBLICLY HIMSELF THE MAJOR OUTLINES OF THE COUNTERPROPOSAL UNDER PREPARATION, IF INDEED HE WANTED THE ISRAELI
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GOVERNMENT TO AWAIT ITS ARRIVAL BEFORE REACTING TO IT. HE STRESSED THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO RPT NO REJECTION OF ANY FORMAL EGYPTIAN PROPOSAL, SINCE ONE HAD NOT YET BEEN RECEIVED. HOWEVER, HE SAID THAT THE CABINET DID NOT BELIEVE IT COULD REMAIN SILENT IN THE FACE OF THIS EXPRESSION OF WHAT WERE CLEARLY VERY DIFFERENT AND UNACCEPTABLE IDEAS GIVEN APPARENTLY AUTHORITATIVELY IN

PUBLIC IN EGYPT. HOWEVER, AS HAD BEEN SUBSEQUENTLY CLARIFIED OFFICIALLY BY THE GOI, THE ISRAELIS WOULD OF COURSE BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS ANY FORMAL PROPOSAL THE EGYPTIANS PUT FORWARD.

3. DAYAN CONFIRMED "OFF THE RECORD" MY SUSPICION THAT THE PRECIPITATE CABINET REACTION WAS A REFLECTION OF THE TURBULENT STATE OF DOMESTIC POLITICS AT THE MOMENT. HE SAID CANDIDLY THAT BEGIN WAS HARD PRESSED THESE DAYS TO DEFEND HIMSELF AGAINST PUBLIC ARGUMENTS BY BOTH WEIZMAN AND PERES THAT SADAT'S REAL POSITION WAS INDEED A GOOD DEAL MORE MODERATE AND FORTHCOMING THAN HIS PUBLIC POSITIONS. BEGIN THEREFORE SEIZED ON THE CAIRO ANNOUNCEMENT OF WHAT WAS TO BE IN THE COUNTER-PROPOSAL AS A WAY OF MAKING CLEAR TO HIS OPPONENTS THAT HIS ASSESSMENT IS CORRECT: THAT SADAT'S CURRENT POSITION IS INTRANSIGENT. WE BOTH LAMENTED THIS PUBLIC EXCHANGE, AND I STRESSED THE NEGATIVE EFFECT IT HAD IN WASHINGTON --WHERE IT WAS INEVITABLY PERCEIVED AS INCONCISTENT WITH THE GOI'S REPEATED ASSERTION THAT "EVERYTHING IS NEGOTIABLE" AND WITH THE GOI'S PROFESSED EAGERNESS TO GET BACK TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE. I STRESSED THAT IT WAS ESSENTIAL TO AVOID ANY FURTHER PREMATURE REATIONS UNTIL THE EGYPTIAN COUNTER-PROPOSAL IS SUBMITTED TO US AND TRANSMITTED FORMALLY TO THE ISRAELIS. DAYAN MADE NO RESPONSE, BUT MY IMPRESSION FROM SOME BACKING AND FILLING GOING ON BY
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GOVERNMENT SPOKESMEN HERE AT THE MOMENT IS THAT THE GOI HAS BEEN TAKEN ABACK BY BOTH PRESIDENT CARTER'S COMMENTS AT HIS MOST RECENT PRESS CONFERENCE AND BY CRITICISM FROM THE ISRAELI PRESS ABOUT THE CABINET'S PREMATURE RJECTION OF IDEAS REPORTED ONLY IN THE PUBLIC MEDIA.

4. DAYAN SAID HE WOULD BRIEF BEGIN ON MY PRESENTATION, AND THEY WOULD AWAIT SUBMISSION TO THEM OF THE EGYPTIAN COUNTERPROPOSAL. HE WARNED ME HOWEVER THAT BEGIN AND THE CABINET WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY GO OVER IT IN DETAIL WHEN IT WAS RECEIVED AND IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO AVOID HAVING ELEMENTS OF IT BECOME PUBLIC THEREAFTER, EVEN IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING, IF IT CAN BE ARRANGED. HE IS STILL CERTAINLY HOPEFUL THAT THE MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE, AND THE SOONER THE BETTER.
LEWIS

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